

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NOUAKC 00052 101401Z

46

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 ACDA-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 OMB-01 SAM-01 AID-05

SY-05 A-01 OPR-02 OC-05 CCO-00 PC-01 SCA-01 SCCT-01

/116 W

----- 048892

P R 101206Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4931

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

FOSIF ROTA

COMSIXTHFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 00052

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MMOL MOSP MR MO SS SP

SUBJECT: SAHARA WATCH: MILITARY SITUATION IN MAURITANIA AND
SOUTHER SAHARA

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 0028

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NOUAKC 00052 101401Z

1. DURING PAST 72 HOURS SECURITY ELEMENTS IN AND AROUND NOUAK-CHOTT CONTINUED THEIR SURVEILLANCE OF MOVEMENTS OF POPULACE IN WHAT HAS NOW BECOME ROUTINE FASHION. PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, AND PARTICULARLY THE AIRPORT, REMAIN UNDER ARMED GUARD. SIX-MAN PATROLS CONTINUE TO CIRCULATE THROUGHOUT CITY DURING THE NIGHT, AND UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ARE FREQUENTLY RAISED THE SECOND TIME BY DAY SHIFT AFTER SUSPECT HAS SPENT NIGHT IN CUSTODY. MOST STRIKING CHANGE IN PROFILE OF SECURITY FORCES APPEARS TO BE INCREASED VIGILANCE WITH WHICH INDIVIDUAL SOLDIERS ARE QUIETLY CARRYING OUT THEIR ASSIGNED FUNCTIONS. MINISTRS AND OTHER RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN ASSIGNED PERSONAL BODYGUARDS. TROOPERS PROTECTING KEY OFFICIALS APPEAR TO BE DISCIPLINED, WELL-ARMED, AND PROFESSIONAL. OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS WHICH INCLUDE DIPLO-MATIC CORPS ARE NOW BEING GUARDED BY SIZABLE SECURITY CONTINGENT. PRIOR TO SECOND WEEK OF DECEMBER, EVEN FUNCTIONS INVOLVING PRESIDENT OF REPUBLIC WERE AFFORDED MAXIMUM OF TWO OR THREE SCRUFFY AND BORED SURETE UNDERLINGS

2. SPANISH EMBASSY OFFICER REPORTS THAT MAURITANIAN FORCES ATTEMPTING TO PUSH NORTHWARD INTO SAHARA REMAIN STALLED FIFTEEN KILOMETERS SOUTH OF AUSERT (2235N, 1415W). ALTHOUGH LIMITED EXCHANGES OF FIRE HAVE OCCURRED BETWEEN THESE FORCES AND POLISARIO UNITS, MOSTLY RESULTING FROM SNIPER ATTACKS BY THE LATTER, MAJOR FACTOR INHIBITING MAURITANIAN ADVANCE APPEARS TO BE LOGISTICAL. HILLY TERRAIN SURROUNDING AUSERT COUPLED WITH INADEQUATE MAURITANIAN RESUPPLY CAPABILITY APPARENTLY HAS GROUND MAURITANIAN ADVANCE Y LAND TO A HALT, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY.

3. MAURITANIAN MECHANIC EMPLOYED BY AMERICAN FIRM ON AIR MAURITANIA MAINTENANCE CONTRACT REPORTS THERE WAS SUSTAINED GUNFIRE IN VICINITY OF BIR MOGREIN (2512N, 1135W) THROUGHOUT MORNING OF 9 JAN. WHILE REPAIRING AIRM AIRCRAFT GROUNDED IN BIR MOGREIN, MECHANIC HEARD CONTINUING GUNFIRE FROM WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS SEMI-AUTOMATIC WEAPONS.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE DOUBT THERE HAS BEEN WEAKEN-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NOUAKC 00052 101401Z

ING OF MAURITANIAN RESOLVE TO ARRIVE IN VILLA CISNEROS PRIOR TO SPANISH DEPARTURE, IT SEEMS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT THEY WILL NOT BE CAPABLE OF DOING SO BY LAND IN ALLOTTED TIME FRAME. AT THIS POINT, STALLED GROUND ORCES NEAR AUSERT, WHICH WERE ORIGINALLY INTENDED TO CONSTITUTE STRIKE FORCE GAINING CONTROL OF VILLA CISNEROS, ARE NO LONGER A CONSIDERATION IN ANY EARLY MAURITANIAN MILITARY VENTURE INTO THAT CITY. IF MAURITANIAN FORCES ARE TO

LAND IN VILLA CISNEROS IN NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, WHICH IS
TIMEFRAME WITHIN WHICH SPANISH EMBASSY STATES ALL SPANISH
FORCES WILL BE WITHDRAWN TO CANARIES, THEY WILL
NEED TO DO SO BY SEA OR BY AIR, POSSIBLY UTILIZING
THE C-130 HERCULES PLACED AT THEIR DISPOSAL BY
GABONESE PRESIDENT BONGO.HANDYSIDE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDEPENDENCE, POLITICAL SUMMARIES, COMBAT OPERATIONS, INVASIONS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NOUAKC00052
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760009-1245
From: NOUAKCHOTT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760169/aaaaciwi.tel
Line Count: 121
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 NOUAKCHOTT 28
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 APR 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <16 AUG 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAHARA WATCH: MILITARY SITUATION IN MAURITANIA AND SOUTHER SAHARA
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, MMOL, MR, MO, SS, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006